

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 25 with the following amended paragraph:

This connection is used during lifting of the fuel assembly to allow the individual fuel rods to be lifted in unison with a desired factor of safety. The shaft 14 is split into separate sections (the tendons 20) by the sleeve openings 28 in the shaft material in the location of the dimple area 34 ~~66~~ to deflect into the dimple area (34).